

years to help alleviate this invasive problem.

Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge and its surrounding wetlands are being threatened by the prolific and highly invasive non-indigenous species nutria which is destroying the tidal marshes and even displacing other native species. Over the past three decades, the population of nutria in Maryland has grown exponentially from about 150 to as many as 150,000—a thousand fold increase. During that same period, Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge has lost more than 40 percent of its marshes—approximately 7000 of 17,000 acres—due, in large part, to nutria. As nutria population densities continue to increase, so does the range of the creature and its associated ecological damage. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, every Maryland county south of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge on both the eastern and western shores has reported nutria. Without action, resource managers believe that valuable habitat will continue to be lost at an accelerated rate, numerous fish and wildlife resources will be impacted, and the range and distribution of this invasive species will continue to expand.

In 1998, the Congress enacted legislation Public Law 105-322—authorizing \$2.9 million for a 3-year pilot project designed to develop techniques to control nutria populations and to restore degraded marsh habitat. Over the past 3 years, approximately \$2 million has been appropriated for studies of the reproductive capacity of the species, methods to eradicate nutria populations, and prospects for restoring wetlands destroyed by the critter along Maryland's Eastern Shore. The authorization expired in September 2002, and new legislation is needed to move to the next phase of a control and ultimately an eradication program. Results of the project in phase II are expected to be applicable throughout the range of nutria in North America, which includes 15 States and potentially over 1 million acres of marsh habitat on national wildlife refuges.

This legislation authorizes the Federal funds necessary to carry out the program. I urge adoption of the legislation.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read three times, passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating thereto be printed in the RECORD, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (H.R. 273) was read the third time and passed.

NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICE DAY

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 112, which was submitted earlier today by Senators MURKOWSKI and AKAKA.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 112) designating April 11th, 2003, as National Youth Service Day, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I rise in support of S. Res. 112, a resolution that requests the President of the United States to designate April 11, 2003 as "National Youth Service Day," acknowledges the remarkable community service efforts of youth today, and encourages all people to recognize and support the significance of these contributions.

NYSD is a public awareness and education campaign that highlights the extraordinary contributions that young people make to their communities throughout the year. On this day, youth from across the United States and the world will carry out community service projects in areas ranging from hunger to literacy to the environment. NYSD is the largest service event in the world with over three million participants. NYSD brings a diverse group of local, regional, and national partners together to support and promote youth service.

As a mother of two young sons, I understand the importance of recognizing and supporting the positive contributions that youth make to our country and the world each and every day. It is imperative to keep young people active and motivated, and instilled with a sense of community responsibility. Volunteer work gives youth an outlet to gain this responsibility, and to learn valuable skills that are essential to personal and academic achievement.

I thank my colleagues—Senators AKAKA, BAUCUS, BIDEN, BROWNBACK, BUNNING, CAMPBELL, CLINTON, COCHRAN, COLLINS, DEWINE, DOMENICI, DURBIN, JOHNSON, KENNEDY, LANDRIEU, LUGAR, MIKULSKI, MURRAY, and STEVENS—for co-sponsoring this worthwhile legislation, which will ensure that youth across the country and the world know that all of their hard work is greatly appreciated.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating thereto be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 112) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 112

Whereas National Youth Service Day is an annual public awareness and education campaign that highlights the amazing contributions that young people make to their communities throughout the year;

Whereas the goals of National Youth Service Day are to mobilize youths to identify

and address the needs of their communities through service, recruit the next generation of volunteers, and educate the public about the contributions young people make as community leaders throughout the year;

Whereas young people in the United States are volunteering more than has any generation in American history;

Whereas the ongoing contributions young people make to their communities throughout the year should be recognized and encouraged;

Whereas young people should be viewed as the hope not only of tomorrow, but of today, and should be valued for the inherent idealism, energy, creativity, and commitment that they employ in addressing the needs of their communities;

Whereas there is a fundamental and absolute correlation between youth service and lifelong adult volunteering and philanthropy;

Whereas, through volunteer service and related learning opportunities, young people build character and learn valuable skills, including time management, teamwork, needs-assessment, and leadership, that are sought by employers;

Whereas service-learning, an innovative teaching method combining service to the community with classroom curriculum, is a proven strategy to increase academic achievement;

Whereas National Youth Service Day was first organized in 1988 by Youth Service America and the Campus Outreach Opportunity League, and is now being observed in 2003 for the 15th consecutive year;

Whereas Youth Service America continues to expand National Youth Service Day, now engaging millions of young people nationwide with 50 Lead Agencies in nearly every State to organize activities across the United States;

Whereas Youth Service America has expanded National Youth Service Day to involve over 60 National Partners;

Whereas National Youth Service Day has inspired Global Youth Service Day, which occurs concurrently in 127 countries and is now in its fourth year; and

Whereas young people will benefit greatly from expanded opportunities to engage in meaningful volunteer service: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved,

SECTION 1. RECOGNITION AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF YOUTH COMMUNITY SERVICE.

The Senate recognizes and commends the significant contributions of American youth and encourages the cultivation of a common civic bond among young people dedicated to serving their neighbors, their communities, and the Nation.

SEC. 2. NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICE DAY.

(a) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the President should designate April 11, 2003, as "National Youth Service Day".

(b) PROCLAMATION.—The Senate requests the President to issue a proclamation—

(1) designating April 11, 2003, as "National Youth Service Day"; and

(2) calling on the people of the United States to—

(A) observe the day by encouraging and engaging youth to participate in civic and community service projects;

(B) recognize the volunteer efforts of our Nation's young people throughout the year; and

(C) support these efforts as an investment in the future of our Nation.